

Transcript of the International Agency's Joint Press Conference in CPIC

Subject: JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE – 10 October 2002

1. The following attended the regular Press Conference held at the CPIC at 11:30 hours on Thursday 10 October 2002:

Agency	Spokesperson	Topic
a. OHR	Patrik Volf	• HR asks parties to come up with constructive proposals. • HR urges RSNA to pass law on ministries.
b. OSCE	Urdur Gunnarsdottir	• Chairman-in-Office to visit BiH on Saturday.
c. UNMIBH	Kirsten Haupt	• SRSG compliments SBS. • UN Trust Fund donation.
d. UNHCR	Bakir Jalovcic	• Latest return statistics.
e. SFOR	Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier	• No statement.

2. Twenty members of the media including two television crews attended the conference.

3. The transcript of the questions and answers is attached.

C. Barraud
Lt. Col. (FR A),
Chief Operations and Plans

Patrik Volf– OHR

Good morning everybody. I have two items for you this morning.

Following his speech yesterday, the High Representative is today issuing a challenge to all the parties, who are planning to form the next government. And his challenge is this, to come up with constructive proposals for implementing the six reforms set out in his speech and which, the International Community believes are essential to make Bosnia and Herzegovina, work and deliver on the peoples priorities of justice and jobs.

The parties have every right to reject these reforms. But, the International Community will judge the parties, genuine commitment to reform by the extent to which, the parties engage constructively in coming up with ideas for implementing these reforms.

On a second note, we understand that the Republika Srpska National Assembly will be meeting on, Thursday next week. We also understand that this session will consider the draft law on ministries. Without this law, the Republika Srpska cannot form a new government in line with the constitutional amendments, as passed by the Republika Srpska National Assembly.

Passing this law is therefore an essential precondition for setting up a new government quickly. The High Representative is urging that the Republika Srpska Nation Assembly pass this law in their next session. The people of the Republika Srpska cannot afford to wait. They deserve to have effective and legal governments established as soon as possible to get on with the urgent reforms that this country needs. Thank you and that is all from my side for today.

Urdur Gunnarsdottir – OSCE

Good morning. I will also try to diminish your suffering here in this post election weather and temperature, by having two very short statements.

The OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Portuguese Foreign Minister Antonio Martins da Cruz, will visit Bosnia and Herzegovina this coming Saturday. During his stay he will meet with Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities and visit the Portuguese SFOR contingent. Minister da Cruz, took over from, Jaime Jose Matos da Gama, who you may remember visiting Bosnia and Herzegovina last March.

Secondly, the Head of mission Ambassador Beecroft will visit Banja Luka, this coming Monday and Tuesday. He will be focusing on education issues, meeting with the Entity Education Ministers, along with representatives from Office of the High Representative and the Council of Europe. Ambassador Beecroft will also meet the Rector of Banja Luka University, with a group of parents and teachers. On Tuesday, he will sit down for an informal coffee with university students. During his stay, ambassador Beecroft will also meet with Republika Srpska Authorities, President and Vice President of the Republika Srpska, as well as, the Speaker of the Republika Srpska National Assembly. Thank you.

Kirsten Haupt – UNMIBH

Good morning. I have two items for you today.

First, the Special Representative of the Secretary General Jacques Paul Klein complimented the State Border Service for their outstanding work conducted at Sarajevo Airport, last week.

In a letter to the director of the State Border Service, Mr. Slavisa Vukovic, Special Representative of the Secretary General Klein, said that this significant achievement of last

week highlighted the growing confidence of State Border Service officers and their ever-increasing professionalism.

You might remember from media reports that appeared last week, that on the, 2 October, the State Border Service refused entry through Sarajevo Airport, to 43 Turkish citizens travelling from Istanbul, all of whom had made false statements as to their reason for seeking entry to Bosnia and Herzegovina. As a result, a further 50 would-be travellers cancelled a similar trip planned for, 3 October. Nonetheless, as expected by the State Border Service, 90 more Turkish citizens, again giving false reasons for entry were identified attempting to enter the same airport on, 3 October, and were returned to Istanbul, the following morning. Thus a total of, 183 migrants, were prevented from illegally seeking to enter Europe.

Special Representative of the Secretary General Klein, pointed out that this success stemmed from an excellent assessment of the circumstances, and praised the intelligence capabilities of the State Border Service, as instilled by the European Union and United Kingdom IMPACT Team and UNMIBH Border Service Department.

On the second note, the UNMIBH mission has supported a street lighting project in Ilidza municipality, with a donation from the United Nations Trust Fund amounting to, 106,254 KM. This much-needed project is now completed and 14 streets in three sectors of the Ilidza municipality are now lit again.

Thirteen of the 14 electrified streets are located in Hrasnica, the part of the municipality, which suffered major damage during the war as it was situated at the front-line and the other street is Krste Hegedusica.

Apart from improving traffic and pedestrian safety in this area, street illumination will contribute to a greater sense of overall public security and the reduction of crime by providing better visibility. As Mr. Souren Seraydarian, the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General and

Officer-in-Charge of the UNMIBH, said, "Improved visibility helps police officers to do their jobs better and gives citizens a greater sense of public safety. Criminologists have shown conclusively that street lighting reduces both crime and the fear of crime".

The United Nations Trust Fund has so far invested some, 50 million KM, in over, 500 projects in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in support for the return to normalcy in many areas. Thank you that is it from me.

Bakir Jalovcic – UNHCR:

Good morning. The UNHCR has only one point, which is the release of the latest return statistics.

During August 2002, UNHCR recorded 8,601 minority returns throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina. The numbers of returns confirm the trend from the previous months of this year. The total number of minority returns recorded in 2002 has thereby reached 69,549.

"Returnees are still showing strong determination for return to their pre-war municipalities and it is therefore necessary for the local authorities and the International Community to support returnees with the required reconstruction assistance. Particularly in view of the upcoming winter," said Udo Janz, UNHCR's Acting Chief of Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The number of minority returns recorded in 2002, show that 28,269, Bosnian Serbs returned to the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and 25,192 Bosniaks returned to the Republika Srpska. The total number of refugees and displaced persons, who returned since the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement, thus has recorded 896,431 persons. That is it, thank you.

Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier – SFOR

No statement from SFOR this morning.

Patrik Volf- OHR

Thank you all on the podium. Any questions?

Questions and Answers

Q: Arijana Saracevic – FTV

Do have any information regarding the rumours that votes from Gorazde are missing?

A: Patrik Volf- OHR

It is my understanding that whatever is happening in this regard is a matter for the Election Commission. We have repeatedly said over the last days and even before, that we have full trust in the Election Commission. I can only recall the independent report that ODIHR issued right after the elections, qualifying the elections as fair and we have no reason to believe this is not the case.

A: Urdur Gunnarsdottir – OSCE

Can I maybe add to this, all the complaints will be investigated according to the election law and commenting before those investigations are finished is totally irresponsible.

Patrik Volf- OHR

Any further questions, thank you very much and have a nice day.